(5) The ryots were poor and required pecuniary aid in the shape of loans. The provisions of the Agricultural Improvement Loans Regulation were not being worked to the benefit of the people, because the Tahsildars were entrusted with the work of granting loans. On account of their multifarious duties they could not properly attend to the work. The only solution was to transfer the work to the Agricultural Department. The Director might be given the power of granting loans up to Rs. 2,000.

In regard to the promotion of industries, the Government should invest capital and carry on some industries and thus encourage and induce people to undertake them. He then mentioned that the manufacture of the following articles might be taken up as the necessary raw materials were available in sufficient quantities in the State, *viz.*, soap, candles, fire matches, paper, sugar and pencil.

The Member then explained the need for the development of salt industry as an indigenous concern. Another way of enriching the State was the proper utilisation of the minor forest produce of the State. The other ways of augmenting the revenue were, according to the Member, (1) the levy of export duty on rubber, (2) the imposition of an income tax on Government Officers, Vakils, Merchants and others getting an annual income of not less than Rs. 1,500 and (3) the revival of the export duty on timber.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

55. Steps to be taken for the development of the cultivation of food products.

Mr. K. Kali Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara taluk) made the following suggestions:—

(1) To improve the means of producing food-stuffs in the State, there should be a Committee in each Division composed of the Conservator of Forests, the Director of Agriculture, the Dewan Peishkar and a few of the leading ryots of the Division.

(2) On account of the high rate of *thadivila* and *tharavila* many people were kept back from registering *puduval* lands. If the high rates could not be reduced, Government lands should be granted for cultivation subject to proper safeguards to protect the interests of Government.

(3) No arable lands should lie uncultivated. They should be cultivated by Government.

(4) Some lands fit for cultivation in Reserved forests had been disafforested. More of such lands should be thrown open for registry.

(5) Tracts of forest lands denuded of timber from Reserved forests and swampy lands fit for cultivation should be granted for purposes of cultivation.

(6) *Punja* lands which were now cultivated every other year should be made cultivable annually, and adequate aid should be afforded to the ryots by Government for the purpose.

Dewan's reply.—A Committee composed of officials and non-officials will be formed for the Trivandrum Division to look into the whole question and submit a report to Government.

56. Agriculture.

Mr. M. K. Raman Pillai (Member, Tiruvalla taluk) regretted that Travancore had to depend upon foreign countries for the paddy required for consumption and suggested the following measures for improving the situation:—

(1) An Economic Committee should be formed, composed of officers and agriculturists, for conducting an agricultural survey to determine the quality and suitability of the soils and climate in different parts of the State to the growth of different crops, and submit a report.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

(2) The area under cultivation should be extended by throwing open for registry all available lands from the Reserved forests, backwaters and other *poramboke*s.

(3) Steps should be taken to prohibit the practice on the part of registry-holders of letting their lands lie fallow occasionally.

(4) Encouragement should be given to *punja* cultivation in Kuttanad in the following ways :—

i. Manure should be sold to the ryots on credit to facilitate annual cultivation experimentally.

ii. An Agricultural Demonstration Farm of 100 acres should be opened in the centre of Kuttanad with a view to convince the ryots of the possibility of annual cultivation of *punja* lands ; and

iii. A Special Officer should be sanctioned for Kuttanad to superintend such experimental cultivation and popularise it.

(5) Agricultural Associations of ryots should be formed in all the Proverthies of the State. Every such Association should have a capital fund which should be augmented by grants from Government and the fund should be utilised in opening model farms, supplying agricultural implements, machines, manure, etc., and constructing and maintaining tanks and channels useful for irrigation. Agricultural Inspectors should be appointed in all taluks and entrusted with the supervision of the working of those Associations.

(6) An Irrigation Engineer should be appointed under the Director of Agriculture, for re-opening and maintaining the disused tanks and channels useful for irrigation throughout the State.

(7) Four Agricultural Schools at least should be opened, one in each Division, for imparting instruction to the ryots in the theory and practice of modern scientific agriculture.

(8) The number of seed-bulls maintained by Government should be increased.

(9) Special attention should be paid to effect a speedy and radical cure of the cocoanut palm diseases which are spreading in the country and to destroy paddy pests like *chazhi*, &c.

(10) Annual Agricultural Exhibitions should be organised at least in three centres in each Division. One of them should be held at Trivandrum in connection with the Assembly session. Grants should be given on a more liberal scale to exhibitions organised by the ryots themselves.

(11) The policy of registering lands in the names of foreigners should be stopped, as the available lands were barely sufficient to meet the demands of the natives.

(12) The Agricultural Inspectors should be given the powers now vested in the Tahsildars of taking action under section 23 of the Irrigation Regulation.

(13) Joint Stock Companies for the cultivation of tea, rubber, cocoanut, pepper, &c., on a large scale should be organised, the capital required therefor being contributed by the Government and the people.

(14) The Agricultural Improvement Loans Regulation should be amended by (i) investing the officers of the Department of Agriculture with the powers to receive and recommend applications for loans and (ii) arranging for the loans being granted within 15 days from the date of recommendation.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly